Development of some parts of the Himalayas as tourist resorts

*409. SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT:†
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to develop some parts of the Himalayas as tourist resorts; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND TOURISM (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) and (b) The Department of Tourism in consultation with the Himalayan States have identified a number of centres in the Himalayan region to developed in a phased manner and according to their *inter-se* priorities by pooling the combined resources of the Centre, the States and the private sector. The list of these centres has been separately laid on the Table of the House. (*See below*) These centres will be developed to enable tourists to enjoy their scenic charms or to take part in activities such as trekking, mountaineering skiling river-rafting and various other forms of adventure tourism.

List of Tourist Centres in Himalayan Region.

JAMMU & KASHMIR:

Katra, Vaishnodevi, Kud, Batote, Kishtwar, Srinagar, Ganderbal, Kangan, Sonamarg, Drass, Kargil Mulbekh, Lamayuru, Leh, Avantipur, Anantnag, Achhabal, Kokernag, Daksum, Martand and Pahalgam.

HIMACHAL PRADESH:

Parwanoo, Chail, Kufri, Narkanda, Simla, Mandi, Kulu, Manali, Manikaran, Dalhousie, Chamba, Nurpur, Trilokpur, Gaggal, Dharamsala, Kangra, Jwalamukhi, Palampur, Jogindernagar, Barot, Bilaspur and Nainadevi.

UTTAR PRASAD:

Kapkote, Lohari Khet, Dakuri, Khati, Dwali, Furkiya and Pindari and Glacier.

WEST BENGAL:

Darjeeling, Manebhanjan, Tonglu, Sandakphu, Rimbik Palmajua and Dhotre.

SIKKIM:

Naya Bazar, Pemayangtse, Yaksum, Keozing, Uavangle,a, Timitarku, (Siwani Singtam), Rumtek, Gangtok, Rangpo, Namche, Chakung, Soreng, Burikhop, Burshey, Hilley, Otterey, Dantam, Burmiok, Legship, Tatapani and Sikip.

SHRI DHARAM CHANDER PRASHANT: Madam, in the reply given by the hon. Minister, so far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, some names which are names of hill centres, are missing. Katra and Vaishnodevi are two important pilgrim places. Then there are Bhadrawan, Sannasar Rattanitop, Mansar, Bhagebahu and others. These are missing . I will request the hon. Minister to note down these centres. There are other places also, Their names are missing. I will request the hon. Minis- should be given by the Minister that this work would start within a year or two, so that these places should not remain isolated.

SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT: I may inform the hon. Members about the places he has mentioned there are certain matters being examined by the State Government for formulating schemes relating thereto. When I also met the Chief Minister only about a month back, this matter was discussed that they should examine the possibility of having some tourist infrastructur at some of the places A large number of schemes are under considearation of the State Government. I have told them to send the schemes to us within a period of two months. I can assure the hon. Member that for the purpose of developing tourist resorts in some areas in Jammu and Kashmir the Central Government is quite earnest about it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Suresh Kalmadi.

†The question was actually asked on the Floor of the House by Shri Dharam chander Prashant.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: An assurance has been given. What more do you want?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, unfortunately, tourism is nobody's business, whereas it should be everybody's buiness primarily because of its employment potential. Madam, the rate of development of tourism is hardly 1 per cent, whereas if you take the surrounding countries it is much more. Take Malayasia, the growth of tourism is 18 per cent, in Hong Kong it is 14 per cent, in Japan it is 12 per cent. Or you take even Sri Lanka; the growth rate is 9 per cent over the preceding year. But the growth rate in India is just 1 per cent. It is very unfortunate. Something must be lacking somewhere. We have a vast coastline, we have lofty mountains, the Himalayas, and we have got cultural heritage. But in spite of this, tourism is not increasing at the rate it should. Madam, the Tourism Ministry has earmarked during the last Sixth Five Year Plan Rs. 150 crores to develop 466 centres. I think the statistics are totally wrong. As far as the Himalayas are concerned, you have given a list of 80 spots to be developed. I think this is a Himalayan blunder. I would like to ask the hon. Minister what his budget is for developing these spots. Instead of developing 80 spots why can't they develop 3 or 4 spots and make them good that so they will get international traffic? My question to you is...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: What was it before?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: What is your specific budget for the 80 spots you propose to develop? How many hundred rupees is it going to be per spot?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: I am grateful to the hon. Member for raising certain questions. He has digressed from the Himalayan tourism and tourism in general. However, I will venture to answer his questions. There is no specific budget allocation for Himalayan tourism as such. All the places which have been identified are identified for development on a short-term and long-term basis. Every scheme which comes is considered on merits. The funds being limited, the idea is to develop tourist places in selected places on a selective basis. Actually, the approach which the hon. Member has suggested is the approach of the Government. Secondly, the hon. Member has mentioned that the rate of growth in tourism is not what has been achieved by other countries. I agree with him. India has many places of interest and we should have more tourism. Keeping that in view, the strategy in the Seventh Plan is not only to concentrate on places of cultural interest, but to concentrate on places of scenic beauty such as the development of beaches, development of mountains and development of other things so that the people can go there in larger numbers. The emphasis is both on domestic tourism as well as on international tourism. The idea is also to explore certain other markets. The Government is quite conscious that tourism should develop in India in a larger measure and the Government is taking steps for the same.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: My question has not been answered.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It has been answered.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: My question is how much funds have been allotted. He is hoodwinking the House. He should have said that there are no funds allotted.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: I am not hoodwinking the people. I am stating the facts. In fact, it is the hon. Member who is hoodwinking the people.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Madam, this is my personal point of view. I am opposed to unchecked growth of tourism, particularly in the areas which are sensitive either culturally or environmentally. Therefore, the list of 80 places which the hon. Minister has given rather than delighting has dismayed me. Therefore, wo-

uld the hon. Minister clarify whether the Ministry of Tourism has conducted any study of the social and cultural and environmental consequences of unchecked tourism, whether it is in the Himalayas or in a region like Jaisalmer?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: I would agree with the hon. Member that while developing tourism, we should not destroy the environmental condition of a particular place and also we must keep its cultural foundation intact. The scheme for any particular place is planned with that broad thinking. These places have been identified because of their scenic beauty, this consideration and that consideration. When it comes to development of a particular place or the execution of a particular scheme, the considerations which the hon. Member has mentioned are kept in view.

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: Has any study been conducted? I did not ask whether you keep these things in mind. My query was: Has any study been conducted? Has a scientific study of the dangerous consequences of unchecked tourism been conducted?

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: I have already stated that when the question of developing a particular area comes up, these considerations are kept in mind and studies are also made.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA: Madam, Panditji while visiting Kerala once said that the beauty of Kerala is next only to the Himalayas. So, we have no grudge that the Government is developing places in the Himalayas. But, unfortunately, one of the most beautiful places in Uttar Pradesh, viz. Mussoorie has been left out in the statement. I do not know why it has been left out. Madam, our contention is that the Southern regions are old than the Himalayas in age. And there are many beautiful scenic places in the Southern region.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question does not arise. The supplementary has nothing to do with the Himalayas.

SHRI M. KADHARSHA: I am coming to the question. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government will see that an overall growth of tourism will be looked into without any discrimination between the regions.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: There is no question of discrimination between one region or the other. The Government is very much interested in promotion of tourism in all the regions, and the Government considers the schemes on merits. For example, the hon. Member is referring to Kerala. I must inform the hon. Member that we have taken up a number of schemes relating to Kerala. Recently, I had a meeting with the Chief Minister of Kerala. There are lots of beautiful places in Kerala and in other States. There is no question of discrimination.

SHRI G. VARADARAJ: Madam Deputy Chairman, while my colleague was mentioning about the Himalayas, I am more concerned about Ooty which is a place of very scenic beauty.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That supplementary does not arise out of this. We cannot go from the Himalayas to Ooty. It takes some time.

SHRI G. VARADARAJ: I would like to know whether the Minister will use his good offices to see that proper air connection there between Coimbatore and Ooty so that tourism development is not affected....

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It does not arise out of this.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: While I realise that the Government is laying more emphasis on development and promotion of tourism, the fact remains that Shimla is without an airport and Sikkim has no air connection with the rest of the country. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what are the steps that they have taken in this regard and I would further like to know whether the

construction of certain repeways at some of the important places mentioned in the statement is under consideration or not of the Government at the moment.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: The Government is quite keen to develop tourism in Sikkim. Of course there are certain places which are under restriction under certain laws. But the Government is keen to develop tourism in Sikkim. At Sikkim and several other places, there are a number of proposals for giving them airlinks and so on. All these matters are taken up by us with the Minister concerned.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question No. 410.

*410. [*The questioner (Shri J. P. Goyal) was absent. For answer,* vide *col.* 37-38 infra]

*411. [*The questioner (Shri Kanak Mukherjee) was absent. For answer,* vide *Col.* 38-39 infra]

*412. [*The questioner (Shri M. Basavaraju) was absent. For answer,* vide *Col.* 39 infra]

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question No. 413.

Procedural Problems Faced by the Non-Resident Indians

*413. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the terms of reference of the Committee set up by the Reserve Bank of India to look into the procedural problems being faced by non-resident Indians; and

(b) by when the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The Committee set up by the Reserve Bank of India will—

(i) examine Exchange Control regulations and procedures and documentation relating to the 40 percent and 74 percent Direct Investment Scheme and the Portfolio Investment Scheme and suggest suitable modifications and simplifications as may be found necessary;

(ii) review the Exchange Control regulations relating to allied issues such as remittance of dividend interest on shares|debentures issued under the above schemes, issue of rights| bonus shares, capitalisation of preliminary expenses incurred by NRIS for setting up individual projects and suggest modifications|simplification in procedures and practices;

(iii) review the present system of delegation of powers to authorised dealers in foreign exchange/regional offices of the Bank in the areas of NRI investment and suggest further delegation; where necessary;

(iv) Consider any other related matters of relevence. The Committee will be free to examine any policy matter relating to NRI investments and make suggestions.

(b) The Committee is likely to submit its Report before the end of December, 1985.

SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Madam, in the written answer supplied to us, in part (a) (iii) it is stated that the Committee will "review the present system of delegation of powers to authorised dealers in foreign exchange|regional offices of the Bank in the areas of NRI investment and suggest further delegation, where necessary." I would like to know from the Minister as to what is the present system of authorisation to these dealers is.

SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI: Sir...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Madam.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER: 'Sir' includes, 'Madam'.